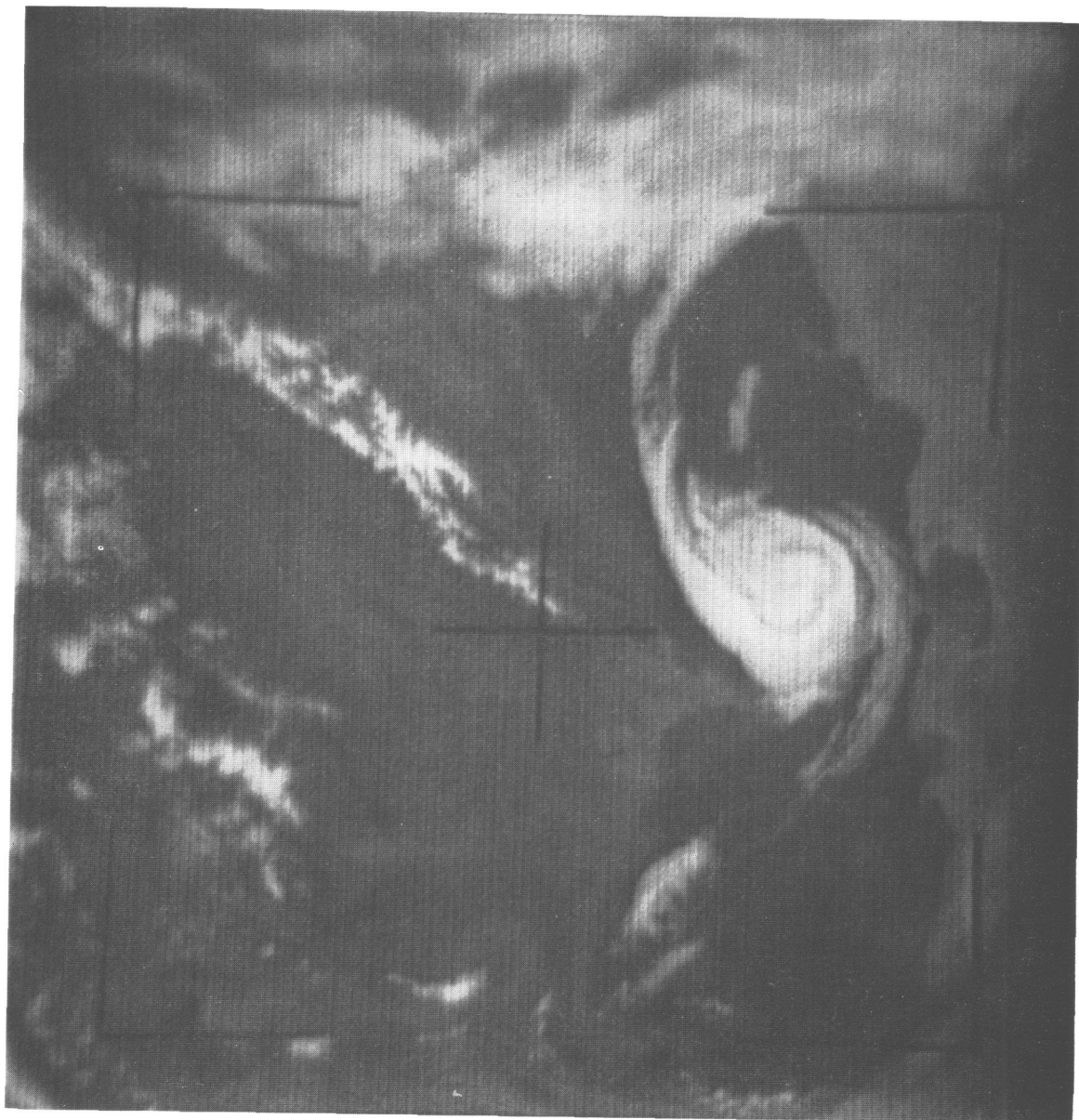


PICTURE OF THE MONTH



This TIROS VII photograph of the Caspian Sea area (pass 2278/2276, frame 27) was taken on November 20, 1963, at 0924 GMT and was received at Pt. Mugu, California, via tape mode. North is roughly toward the top of the picture.

The apparent small vortex or cyclonic swirl of cloud is centered over the middle of the Caspian Sea itself. Its existence is not obvious from the conventional surface data. The surface synoptic analysis for 1200 GMT shows the general area was under a weak ridge of high pressure,

but with the remnants of a trailing cold front extending over the Caspian Sea from the northeast. The cloud spiral could have been associated with the trailing cold front, but it might also have been mechanically induced by flow across the mountains to the west, or thermally induced by surface heating from the relatively warm sea.

The snow-covered Caucasus Mountains can be seen extending west-northwest from near the center-cross fiducial mark.